



## Security Council

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### Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 8592nd meeting of the Security Council, held on 7 August 2019, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Peace consolidation in West Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the briefing on 24 July 2019 by the Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, Mohamed Ibn Chambas.

"The Security Council recalls its resolutions [2480 \(2019\)](#), [2423 \(2018\)](#), [2391 \(2017\)](#), [2359 \(2017\)](#), [2349 \(2017\)](#) and [2320 \(2016\)](#), as well as its presidential statements [S/PRST/2017/2](#), [S/PRST/2017/10](#), [S/PRST/2018/3](#) and [S/PRST/2018/16](#).

"The Security Council expresses full support to the Special Representative, in carrying out his mandate, and ongoing activities undertaken by UNOWAS. The Security Council notes the increased demands on UNOWAS, including in Guinea-Bissau, post-transition countries and joint work with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union Mission for Mali and the Sahel (MISAHEL), and in that regard continues to underline the need for more support and adequate resources to UNOWAS.

"The Security Council welcomes the ongoing cooperation between UNOWAS and the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) towards supporting the implementation of the Lomé Declaration of 30 July 2018 and in addressing cross-regional threats to peace and security in West and Central Africa and the Sahel, including on early warning systems and in this regard, calls for cooperation between ECOWAS-ECCAS/UNOWAS-UNOCA in relation to maritime crime, organised crime and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

"The Security Council welcomes the decision of the Secretary General to conduct a strategic review regarding the scope of UNOWAS' mandate and activities, stresses the need for its independent nature and invites the Secretary General to present to the Council its recommendations as well as his observations on these recommendations, including on potential areas of improvement or new or refocused priorities, including on Counter Terrorism, effects of climate change on security, intercommunal violence as part of a broad prevention and sustaining peace agenda, and present these by 15 November 2019, in order to usefully inform the Council's discussions on the renewal of the Mission's mandate which will expire on 31 December 2019.



“The Security Council reiterates its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of all countries in West Africa and the Sahel.

“The Security Council emphasises that security and stability in Mali are inextricably linked to that of the Sahel and West Africa, as well as to that of Libya and North Africa,

“The Security Council takes note of the inter-Togolese dialogue process, and hopes it can provide the foundation for a free and fair, credible, timely and peaceful Presidential election in Togo in 2020.

“The Security Council welcomes the generally peaceful conduct of presidential elections in 2019 in Nigeria, Senegal and Mauritania, as well as the legislative elections Guinea-Bissau.

“The Security Council expresses its deep concern about the continued deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the Sahel region and calls for a continued regional and international engagement to help these countries to address the peace and security challenges they face and it further welcomes in this regard the efforts of the Secretary General to adapt UN support on the ground in Burkina Faso and Niger, and requests to receive updates on these integrated cross-pillar processes through the regular reporting on UNOWAS.

“The Security Council recalls resolution [2458 \(2019\)](#) and notes the Bissau-Guinean political leaders’ recent compromise leading to the appointment of a new Prime Minister and setting the date of the presidential election on 24 November 2019 and reiterates its call for UNIOGBIS to gradually draw down and transfer tasks to UNOWAS.

“The Security Council urges the national authorities and people of The Gambia to continue in their efforts towards consolidating peace, through political reform, security sector reform and transitional justice processes, as well as the review of the Constitution. It also welcomes the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and the Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission (TRRC) and the commencement of its public hearing on January 7, 2019, marking an important milestone in the country’s quest for justice, peace and reconciliation.

“The Security Council recalls the provisions of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance that State Parties shall ensure that the process of amendment or revision of their constitution reposes on national consensus, obtained, if need be, through referendum and, while expressing concern about the increasingly polarised environment, calls upon UNOWAS to encourage all political stakeholders to use dialogue to resolve their differences in that regard.

“The Security Council encourages the consolidation of ongoing political reforms in the region to prevent violence and instability, as well as progress in the area of national reconciliation in Sierra Leone and Liberia. The Security Council underlines the need for the United Nations to sustain support in this regard including in non-mission settings, and welcomes the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund in sustaining peace and peacebuilding efforts.

“The Security Council emphasises the need for national stakeholders in Guinea-Bissau, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea and Togo to work together to facilitate the timely preparation for, and holding of genuinely free and fair, credible,

timely and peaceful elections, and to take all appropriate steps to prevent violence, and urges them to ensure a level playing field for all candidates and to work towards full, equal, and meaningful participation of women, including with a view to increasing the number of women appointed to senior government positions, in accordance with their respective constitutions and national, regional and global commitments.

“The Security Council emphasises the important role of women in prevention and resolution of conflicts, in peacebuilding as well as in post-conflict situations, and stressing the importance of their full, equal, and meaningful participation and involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, as recognised in relevant Security Council resolutions including resolution 1325 (2000) and resolution 2242 (2015).

“The Security Council reiterates the need for an integrated gender perspective in the design and implementation of comprehensive strategies to address the root causes of the crisis. The Security Council welcomes efforts by UNOWAS and ECOWAS to work towards the systematic involvement of women in initiatives to counter terrorism and prevent violent extremism, as and when conducive to terrorism, and further requests that these issues continue to be integrated into regular reporting by UNOWAS.

“The Security Council reiterates its concern over the challenging security situation in West Africa and the Sahel, notably threats posed by terrorism, maritime piracy, conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, and transnational organised crime, including trafficking in persons, arms and drugs and illegal exploitation of natural resources, which can be interlinked, and welcomes UNOWAS efforts to support regional analysis and early warning mechanisms.

“The Security Council welcomes the leadership demonstrated by countries in West Africa and the Sahel in spearheading initiatives to address security challenges in the region and commends their efforts as well as of the African Union and ECOWAS, to strengthen security in border regions and regional cooperation, as well as to address the impact of terrorism and transnational organised crime, including through the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel (FC-G5S). The Security Council reaffirms that Member States must ensure that any measures taken to counter terrorism comply with all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights law, international refugee law and international humanitarian law, as applicable. The Council highlights in this regard the need for legal frameworks and strategies addressing the growing number of persons in detention associated with violent extremist and terrorist groups. The Security Council underlines the need for security efforts to be aligned with political objectives, to enable the restoration of civilian security, the establishment of effective governance to deliver essential services, and the revival of local economies to provide livelihood opportunities for surging youth populations. The Security Council encourages ECOWAS and the G5 Sahel to identify areas of complementarity in preventing conflict and sustaining peace in the region, and further recalls the important role of UNOWAS in providing technical assistance to the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel.

“The Security Council welcomes the study concluded by UNOWAS on conflicts between pastoralists and farmers in the region, which concludes that tensions are being driven by competition for natural resources, rapid population growth, weak governance, pressures related to climate and ecological factors, and the circulation of small arms and light weapons. It encourages ECOWAS and its Member States, with the support of UNOWAS, to address these

challenges in a coordinated and holistic manner. The Security Council further expresses its deep concern about the intensification of intercommunal violence in Central Mali and Burkina Faso, and reiterates that stabilisation of the situation and protection of civilians in this region requires a fully integrated response, led by the governments of those countries, with the support of UNOWAS and the international community, and encompassing simultaneous pursuit of progress on security, governance, humanitarian assistance and development, reconciliation, as well as protection and promotion of human rights.

“The Security Council recalls that the illicit transfer, of small arms and light weapons continue to pose threats to international peace and security, including in West Africa and the Sahel.

“The Security Council also recalls its resolutions [2331 \(2016\)](#) and [2388 \(2017\)](#) and reaffirms its condemnation in the strongest terms of all instances of trafficking in persons, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers in violation of international law in areas affected by armed conflict. The Security Council welcomes the coordination between the European Union, the African Union and the United Nations and encourages further cooperation between them, in particular within the joint Task Force, aimed at saving and protecting the lives of migrants and refugees – including trafficking victims – along routes, and in particular inside Libya.

“The Security Council expresses concern over the overall humanitarian situation in the region, notably characterised by the impact of violence, forced displacement, extreme poverty and social inequalities, including sexual and gender-based violence, and calls for significant humanitarian and development action as well as the disbursement of previously pledged funds.

“The Security Council regrets the loss of life caused by terrorist activity in the Lake Chad Basin, and notes progress made in the implementation of Security Council resolution [2349 \(2017\)](#) to support a regional response to the crisis in the Lake Chad basin, where an estimated 2.5 million people have been displaced, and welcomes the continued efforts of the countries of the Lake Chad basin. It applauds the mobilisation of additional resources for the stabilisation of the Lake Chad Basin during a high-level conference on 3 and 4 September 2018 in Berlin on the Lake Chad region. The Security Council welcomes efforts of the Governments in the Lake Chad Basin Region and regional and subregional organisations to prevent further deterioration of the crisis, while recognising the need for enhanced national and regional efforts to effectively address the security situation as well as the humanitarian and early recovery needs. In that regard the Security Council welcomes the “Lake Chad Basin Governors” Forum for Regional Cooperation held in Niamey on 17 and 18 July 2019.

“The Security Council recognises the adverse effects of climate change, ecological changes and natural disasters, including through drought, desertification, land degradation and food insecurity among other factors on the stability of West Africa and the Sahel region and continues to stress the need for long-term strategies, based on risk assessments, by governments and the United Nations, to support stabilisation and build resilience and encourages UNOWAS to continue to integrate this information in its activities.

“The Security Council stresses the need for strengthening collective engagement across the Sahel region, in line with existing frameworks, and in this regard welcomes the strengthened cooperation between the UN and the AU, in particular through the Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in

Peace and Security and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

“The Security Council underlines the need for a more integrated, cross-pillar approach across the development, humanitarian, human rights and peace and security nexus, including to address root causes of crises, provide assistance to vulnerable populations, including migrants and refugees, prevent further tensions and violence, effectively hold accountable and bring to justice individuals responsible for human rights violations, tackle exclusion and poverty, strengthen resilience of institutions and communities, promote good governance and build peaceful, just and inclusive societies.

“The Security Council welcomes the collective United Nations efforts, towards recalibrating the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), and to develop the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel to expedite its impact, in line with the needs of the Sahel people and national and regional priorities, and in close collaboration with partners and countries of the region. The Security Council encourages efforts to foster greater coherence and coordination within the UN System as well as with partners in the region through the efficient implementation of the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel, in coordination with the Special Representative and UNOWAS.

“The Security Council calls upon Member States and other actors, including UNDP, to align their activities under the UNISS and join efforts in mobilising the necessary resources to this end, and further requests the Secretary-General to keep it informed of the progress towards enhancing the coherence and effectiveness of UN engagement in the Sahel.

“The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to provide information on UNOWAS efforts with respect to aspects highlighted in this statement, and reiterates its call for an assessment of the implementation of its resolution 2349 to be integrated into regular reporting by UNOWAS.”